

Volunteers In Parks Program Guidelines

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To request copies of this handbook or to suggest improvements,
please contact the Volunteer Programs Coordinator at
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Volunteers In Parks Program Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

The VIP Program

The Volunteers In Parks (VIP) Program provides for an organized, efficient, cost-effective, and legally based approach to managing a wide range of volunteer programs in California State Parks *.

Department Mission Statement

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valuable natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.

How to Use the *VIPP Guidelines*

This handbook is designed to assist DPR staff in managing volunteer programs. Specifically, volunteer coordinators and superintendents should refer to the policies and procedures explained in this document to guide them in developing and implementing their volunteer programs. Readers should also refer to the Departmental Operations Manual (DOM), the Departmental Administrative Manual (DAM), and Departmental Notices.

The *Volunteers In Parks Program Guidelines* is divided into three sections:

Part I, "DPR Volunteers In Parks Policies," details policies and guidelines with regard to the legal requirements for managing volunteer programs within DPR.

Policy Notes are incorporated into this section (and are boxed like this one) to focus attention and provide more detail on important aspects of volunteer management policy.

Part II, "Managing a Volunteer Program," offers guidance and suggestions on establishing a program, including recruiting, selecting, training, and rewarding volunteers.

Part III, "Appendix," contains reference material that should be helpful to managers of volunteer programs, including samples of required and optional forms.

* The Department's official name is "California Department of Parks and Recreation". In this section of the *Guidelines*, the official name will be shortened to "the Department" or "DPR."

Historical Background

California State Parks volunteers follow a proud tradition of direct citizen support for public parks that dates back to the mid-19th century. Volunteer support for public parks began in the 1860s when concerned citizens helped to establish Yosemite as California's first state park. From that time forward, the state's volunteer forces have never wavered from serving the needs of Californians and visitors from all over the world.

Volunteers were the driving force behind the creation of our modern system of state parks. In 1928, a massive statewide volunteer program was organized to survey all of California for potential state park sites. This volunteer program helped define the ongoing mission of the Department and created a foundation upon which our modern system of over 270 state park units rests.

Today, Californians enjoy one of the largest and most popular park systems in the world. The diversity and beauty of California's state parks attract over 65 million visitors annually, challenging park managers to seek alternative and cost efficient ways of providing for needed maintenance, visitor programs and overall operational support.

Who Are Our Volunteers?

DPR attracts and retains large numbers of interested, qualified and dedicated volunteers. The chart below summarizes the numbers of volunteers and the hours they contributed as VIPs over the last decade.

Volunteers In Parks - Annual Summaries for 1993 - 2001

Year	Number of Volunteers	Hours Contributed
1993	8,732	672,688
1994	11,041	732,610
1995	11,882	885,524
1996	12,074	968,234
1997	14,945	1,027,297
1998	15,081	952,411
1999	13,126	924,541
2000	12,289	921,250
2001	11,608	880,521

Volunteers have become an integral link in the overall operation of our state parks. In 2001, over 11,000 volunteers gave 880,000 hours of their time, talents and energies to California State Parks. They provided an estimated equivalent value of over \$14 million in support for state park programs and projects. Such volunteer efforts add to and enrich the visitor's experience and are of personal value to the volunteers themselves.

The reasons why people volunteer are as numerous as the types of work they do for state parks. Most volunteers have more than one reason or objective for donating their time, but a common motivation is the satisfaction of performing a needed job and doing it well. Volunteering gives people the opportunity to do things they want to do – and can learn to do. Although many people volunteer their career-related skills, others prefer doing jobs that are entirely different from their everyday work.

Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and possess different abilities and desires. Some thrive on interacting with people and making new friends who may have similar interests, while others prefer working alone. Daily interaction and socializing among volunteers, and between staff and volunteers, contributes to a healthy and active volunteer program.

The Value of Volunteers

There are many advantages to the Department in working with volunteers. Enabling people in the community to be actively involved with DPR programs increases public support for state parks and helps people better understand management decisions. Volunteers can enhance existing programs or begin new projects at a minimal cost to taxpayers. They can provide service on a temporary basis or provide a long-term commitment. Often they bring expertise that is not otherwise present in the Department.

Groups of volunteers may be recruited for projects that relate to their specific organizational goals and interests. For example, a volunteer project could be designed to fulfill requirements for schoolwork or scout merit badges. Short-term projects requiring large numbers of people, such as maintenance of a long segment of trail or assisting with a major special event, can be accomplished through group involvement. The advantage of mobilizing such groups is that they not only have their own leadership and infrastructure, but also maintain their own workers' compensation and liability insurance. As a result, the project becomes more beneficial to DPR.

Effective volunteer programs are in the best interest of the Department and the public. It is worth the time and energy it takes to properly manage them.

Volunteer Opportunities

Individuals in the Volunteers In Parks Program perform a variety of duties that assist staff and enhance services. Traditionally, volunteers have been associated with individual park units, providing a variety of visitor-related services under the guidance of park staff. Today, volunteers also work with state park staff assisting with administrative duties at district offices and headquarters. The variety of activities that volunteers assist with and engage in is as diverse as the backgrounds and interests of the volunteers themselves, including:

- Horse Patrol
- Mountain Bike Patrol
- Museum Tours
- Park Publications
- Special Events
- Caring for Collections
- Interpretation for Visitors
- Trail Construction and Maintenance
- Fund Raising
- Off-Highway Vehicle Park Patrol
- Visitor Education

- Video Programs
- Camp Hosts
- Park Equipment Maintenance
- Artifact Cataloging
- Research
- Marketing
- Native Plant Enhancement
- Exotic Plant Removal
- And much, much more...

Specialized Volunteer Programs

Specialized volunteer programs are found throughout California State Parks. They generally require formal training and/or a specific length of time commitment from each prospective volunteer. These specialized programs include the following:

Docents

Docents are highly trained volunteers who interpret for park visitors the cultural, natural, and recreational resources of state parks. One of the most rewarding and challenging aspects of being a docent is the opportunity for ongoing education. People enrolling in docent programs embark upon a rigorous course of study and training that provides a strong foundation of expertise for interpreting the varied resources of a particular park unit. To this foundation each docent is encouraged to add his or her own unique and individual approach and experiences.

Campground Hosts

Campground hosts are recruited to be visible representatives of the Department at campgrounds and day-use areas. In most cases they temporarily reside on-site. Their volunteer duties include encouraging compliance with park rules and regulations (they do not perform actual law enforcement duties), collecting fees (when authorized), performing light janitorial duties, and furnishing information and assistance to park visitors. In addition to standard campground operations, camp hosts may also assist with a variety of other responsibilities including children's programs, visitor centers and museums, and maintenance. As with all volunteers, hosts work under specific agreements and duty statements. They must receive orientation and training to perform their duties. Hosts are supervised by the employee who has direct responsibility for the particular park in which they are located.

Student Interns

Unpaid college and high school internships provide an opportunity for students to complement academic studies with career-related work experience. Supervisors of these volunteers are generally required to formally evaluate the work performance of those interns receiving course credit for volunteer work. Paid college and high school interns are managed as seasonal employees, not as volunteers.

Patrol Units

Several state parks offer opportunities for volunteers who own horses, mountain bikes, personal watercraft or off-highway vehicles to participate in trail safety patrols that augment regular state park ranger patrols. Among other activities, patrol volunteers provide information and assistance. If authorized and properly trained, they may provide first aid and other emergency assistance to park visitors. They also help maintain trails within park units.

PART I

Volunteers In Parks Program Policies

A. Legal Authority and Requirements

In 1978, with the passage of the California State Government Volunteers Act (Government Code §3110 through §3119.2), the Governor and the Legislature recognized the value of volunteerism to State government and all of California. In Government Code §3112, the Legislature declared (in part):

- (a) *Since the spirit of volunteerism has long animated generations of Americans to give of their time and abilities to help others, the state would be wise to make use of volunteers in state service wherever practically possible.*
- (b) *The spirit of citizen initiative and self-reliance that has prevailed throughout the United States for over the past two centuries needs to be recognized and fostered whenever possible in meeting the basic human needs in the state.*
- (c) *In every community or neighborhood there are individuals who, by their personality, concern, experience, commitment, and training, can serve as citizen action leaders.*
- (d) *There presently exists sufficient resources to assist citizen action efforts. There are an infinite number of skilled, experienced community groups, and volunteer organizations available to help mobilize citizen initiatives. Such groups include business and fraternal organizations, churches, women's organizations, voluntary action centers, schools and other community organizations in both the public and private sectors.*
- (e) *Legal and marketing disincentives and impediments need to be eliminated in order to establish an optimum environment for citizen initiative and volunteer action.*
- (f) *There is a need for a clearinghouse, to provide information concerning resources and alternatives to foster self-reliance and citizen action.*
- (g) *It is not the intent of the Legislature that volunteers replace or supplant public employees, where such employees are providing services deemed necessary for the government to perform, but that they add new dimensions to providing of government services.*

Under Government Code §3116, authorization is given to recruit, train and accept volunteers who augment, but not replace, staff:

In order to maximize the involvement of volunteers in state government, the office is, hereby, authorized in order to develop effective citizen involvement to assist state departments and agencies to recruit, train, and accept the services of volunteers, including direct service volunteers or administrative volunteers, to supplement the programs administered by each state department.

It is the intent of the California Department of Parks and Recreation to adhere to the goals of volunteerism as specified in Government Code §3117:

- (a) To foster the spirit of citizen initiative and voluntary action among businesses, industries and individual citizens in the community;*
- (b) To enable adequate communication and collaboration whereby individuals and agencies may converse with each other to initiate new programs or improve existing programs for citizen initiative and voluntary action at the local level;*
- (c) To identify untapped human, technical and material resources that can be mobilized for the public good through citizen initiative and voluntary action;*
- (d) To open up the process of government and social institutions and to provide a common ground for two fundamental concepts, i.e., volunteerism and citizen initiative, to be brought together in mutually supportive relationships as a basis for better service; and*
- (e) To achieve an effective and permanent expansion of citizen initiative and voluntary action in community problem solving and citizen participation in the delivery of government services.*

Under California Government Code §3118, all volunteers are required to adhere to Department policy and shall undertake no actions within any park property or represent themselves as representatives of the Department or of the State of California without prior approval from the district superintendent, headquarters division chief, or designee. Specifically:

All volunteers shall comply with applicable department and other state policy and regulations. It shall be the responsibility of the state department in which a volunteer participates to ensure this compliance.

Under California Government Code §3119, authority is granted to state agencies to utilize volunteers, with specific and general requirements to provide adequate staff support, establish certain rules, and ensure that volunteers and staff understand their duties and responsibilities within this framework. Specifically:

Each state department or division is hereby authorized to utilize the services of volunteers. Each state department or division utilizing the services of volunteers shall:

- (a) Provide sufficient staff for the effective management and development of volunteer programs.*
- (b) Develop written rules governing job descriptions, recruitment, screening, training, responsibility, utilization, supervision, and insurance of volunteers.*
- (c) Take such actions as are necessary to ensure that volunteers understand their duties and responsibilities.*

B. Organizational Structure

The management of the Department's volunteer program is a multi-level task, with overall guidelines and policy development established and maintained by Park Operations through the Volunteer Programs Coordinator. The diversity of volunteer programs and wide-ranging geographic locations of the programs require local management and supervision by individual district and park staff.

1. Volunteer Programs Coordinator

The Volunteer Programs Coordinator in the Interpretation and Education Division of Park Operations serves as the statewide coordinator of the Department's VIP programs. This employee:

- Provides support for district superintendents and division chiefs in their review of VIP programs and policy issues.
- Provides support for volunteer coordinators in their implementation of volunteer programs.
- Initiates and develops training classes pertinent to VIP program activities.
- Advocates, supports, and promotes the statewide volunteer program.
- Develops and distributes forms, passes, and guidelines that assist volunteer management activities.
- Reviews VIP program activities and prepares the VIP Annual Report.
- Manages volunteer enhancement funds, when available.

2. District Superintendent/Division Chief/Section Manager

These positions provide primary oversight and management of all volunteer activities at the district, headquarters division, or section. The district superintendent, HQ division chief, or section manager may delegate VIP program management to a district/HQ division/section volunteer coordinator when the transferred duties and responsibilities are documented in the individual duty statements of paid employees, as well as in the duty statements of volunteers.

3. Volunteer Coordinator (District/Division/Section)

The Volunteer Coordinator is designated by the district superintendent, HQ division chief, or section manager, and, as specified in the Volunteer Coordinator's duty statement, will:

- Plan, direct and oversee the district/division/section-wide volunteer program.
- Coordinate volunteer program leaders' activities, including recruitment, screening, and required training of volunteers.
- Coordinate the district's volunteer recognition program.
- Compile and submit annual district volunteer activity reports to the Volunteer Programs Coordinator by February 1st of each year.
- Apprise the superintendent/chief/manager of all volunteer program activities, relevant problems, and personnel issues.

Policy Note: Volunteer Coordinator

To reduce confusion regarding organizational roles and responsibilities, and to ensure a clear administrative separation between cooperating associations and volunteer programs, the Department employee holding the district volunteer coordinator position shall not concurrently hold the cooperating association liaison (CAL) position.

Exceptions must be approved by the district superintendent. (See "Section M: Cooperating Associations and Volunteers.")

4. Volunteer Coordinator (Unit Level)

The Unit Volunteer Coordinator generally serves as the volunteers' primary representative for meeting the requirements of Government Code §3119 (a) (b) and (c) [refer to Legal Authority Section]. The Volunteer Coordinator, as specifically delegated in his or her duty statement by the district superintendent, HQ division chief, or section manager, shall:

- Maintain a close working relationship with the district volunteer coordinator.
- Ensure that all volunteers complete the required administrative forms.
- Provide lead responsibility for volunteer recruitment, orientation, training, duty statements (to be approved by a supervisor), scheduling, and input for volunteer selection, performance evaluation, and recognition.
- Maintain volunteer records and statistics to be compiled and reported to the district volunteer coordinator annually or as required.
- Assist with evaluation of volunteers.

Policy Note: Supervisor Role

While non-supervisory staff may provide most of the actual day-to-day oversight of a volunteer program, a few supervisory-specific jobs, such as hiring, firing, and providing formal performance appraisals, must be accomplished by a designated supervisor.

Policy Note: Volunteer Supervisors

Where appropriate, a volunteer may act as a unit volunteer coordinator, provided the lead volunteer is under the direct supervision of a paid staff member and maintains close communication.

C. Volunteer Eligibility

Department volunteers (VIPs) are individuals who, without compensation, contribute time and service to assist DPR in the accomplishment of its mission. They may be individuals or part of a group.

1. Individuals

Volunteers are recruited without regard to race, religion, color, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability.

The two universal requirements for all volunteers are:

- (a) There must be a specific task identified for the volunteer.
- (b) Each volunteer must be able to safely and adequately perform the work that he or she will be assigned.

The Department is not obligated to accept or retain any person who volunteers his/her services.

Policy Note: DPR Volunteer – Definition

A DPR volunteer (VIP) is an individual under the direction of DPR personnel who, of his or her own free will and without compensation, contributes time and service to assist DPR in the accomplishment of its mission. **Volunteers are not considered "unpaid employees"** and they do not have the same rights as employees.

Policy Note: Active Volunteer Status

Districts must establish minimum requirements for determining "active" volunteer status. Based upon ongoing assessments of individual district and park program needs, district standards must be set for establishing the minimum number of hours worked that will qualify volunteers for ongoing active status. For example, many docent and volunteer programs have established six to eight hours of volunteer work time per month (following the initial training period) as the minimum necessary to maintain active volunteer status. Other park units or districts may set higher time requirements, such as two days per month.

2. Juveniles

Juveniles are defined as individuals under the age of 18. They may serve as VIPs if they provide acceptable written parental or guardian consent. Work permits are not required, but are recommended. The district should determine minimum age requirements for specific tasks and times when parent or guardian presence might be required. Also, all appropriate labor laws governing the work hours of juveniles must be followed.

Policy Note: Juveniles

- (a) Labor law regarding juveniles does not currently refer directly to volunteer activities. However, it does specifically address the health and safety of workers under the age of 18. For example, any work considered potentially hazardous to life or limb is prohibited, such as working on or around machinery, on railroad equipment, or with hazardous chemicals. Operating a motor vehicle is prohibited.
- (b) During the school year, a total of 32 hours of work is generally allowed each week: four hours on school days, eight hours on Saturdays, and four hours on Sundays. Work permits issued by schools to students are recommended.
- (c) Juveniles who arrive in a state park with adults who are not their parents or legal guardians shall not be allowed to participate in volunteer activities without the written permission of a parent or legal guardian.

3. Formally Organized Groups

Formal organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, school groups, public and privately held companies, nonprofit corporations, and other organizations that maintain liability insurance policies may apply using the *Volunteer Group Services Agreement* (DPR 208B).

Policy Note: Group Insurance

The organization's liability insurance coverage must meet the minimum required for a special event. Refer to form DPR 169 in the Appendix, *Certificate of Insurance and Insurance Instructions* (excluding section 1.2, Builders Risk).

Questions may be referred to the Department of General Services, Office of Risk and Insurance Management at (916) 376-5300.

Policy Note: Insurance Waiver

Under those conditions where the benefit clearly outweighs the risk, a district superintendent or sector superintendent may waive the insurance requirement.

4. Department Employees

DPR employees are eligible to participate as VIPs, but they may not participate in duties that they are normally paid to perform. DPR employees must sign a *Volunteer Service Agreement* (VSA) (DPR 208) and be treated like other volunteers with regard to duty statements, standards of conduct, and all other administrative matters.

Policy Note: Department Employees

Department employees may volunteer their services, but the *Fair Labor Standards Act* prohibits state employees from participating in duties that they are normally paid to perform within the scope of their employment. This includes duties that would appropriately be assigned based on the class specifications, in addition to those on the employee's duty statement. (See Appendix III: *Fair Labor Standards Act Manual; Volunteers*)

5. Employees' Family Members

Family members of DPR employees may perform volunteer services in state parks as long as the appropriate forms are completed and approved by a non-family member.

Policy Note: Employees' Family Members

DPR employees shall not act as Department representatives in signing *Volunteer Service Agreements* (DPR 208) for volunteer services that are to be provided by their immediate family members. Refer to the Department's nepotism policy regarding placement and working relationships between people with close personal relationships.

6. Medical Condition and Physical Limitation

Health questionnaires must be completed by all new long-term volunteers and handled in the following manner:

- (a) The prospective volunteer must complete a *Health Questionnaire* (STD. 910) which, as a confidential document, is submitted directly to the district's personnel assistant or district administrative officer (DAO). Headquarters' volunteer questionnaires should be submitted by the volunteer directly to the Personnel Office. The DAO or Headquarters' Personnel Office will make a determination as to whether or not the described condition or limitation will impact either the volunteer's ability to safely complete the tasks identified in the duty statement, or whether it might place the volunteer in an unsafe work situation. If it is determined that no significant risk exists, then the volunteer should be allowed to participate.

Policy Note: Confidentiality

All documents containing personal information collected by DPR from volunteer applicants will be accorded the same procedures and protections for maintenance of confidentiality as DPR accords to employees and job applicants. Maintaining the confidentiality of personal information collected from volunteers or volunteer applicants is required under the *Information Practices Act*, which does not differentiate between employees and volunteers with regard to confidentiality.

- (b) If the district personnel assistant or DAO reasonably determines (or is unable to determine) that the stated medical condition or limitation may impact the volunteer's ability to complete the prescribed work in a safe manner, the *Health Questionnaire* must be forwarded to DPR Headquarters Personnel Office for a determination by the Workers' Compensation and Safety Program Manager. If additional review is needed, HQ Personnel Office will submit the *Health Questionnaire* along with a copy of the duty statement to the State Medical Officer for a determination.

Policy Note: Health Questionnaire

A prospective volunteer who is awaiting a determination on a health questionnaire shall not be allowed to begin volunteer service prior to receiving proper medical clearance. If deemed appropriate by the District Administrative Officer, a prospective volunteer may begin the classroom elements of volunteer training while awaiting final medical clearance.

7. Background Checks

Some duties that volunteers may perform will require that criminal history checks be completed prior to being accepted into these positions (Departmental Notice 2001-13 in the Appendix). This procedure can take from two weeks to two months to complete, depending upon whether or not “expedited” processing (for an extra fee) is selected. The district is responsible for payment of all processing fees.

When a volunteer will perform any of the following duties, a criminal history check is required:

- Volunteering as a camp host.
- Supervising or having exclusive control over minor children when no other adult supervisor (for example, a teacher or parent) is also present. This is especially important for nature walks, Junior Ranger programs, museum tours, and other programs that are specifically advertised for “children only.”
- Having independent access to security systems, warehouses, master keys, locked offices, shops, interpretive collections, or expensive equipment.
- Working with purchase documents or large sums of money (amount to be determined by the district superintendent).
- Having access to black powder, primers or other ammunitions, even if only for antique firearms.

Questions about the above, including processing of background checks, should be directed to the Field Services Division, Public Safety Section.

Policy Note: Criminal History

- (a) Refer to Departmental Notice 2001-13 (in Appendix III) for legal requirements and administrative procedures for implementing criminal history background checks.
- (b) A section on the *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208) requests from the volunteer the permission needed for completing a background check. **The volunteer will complete this section only if a background check is required.**

Policy Note: Firearms/Ammunition

The Federal Gun Control Act of 1997, which states that the Department and/or any employee may not provide any firearms and/or ammunition to anyone with a history of domestic violence, applies to volunteers as well as employees. **Any volunteer whose duties include handling firearms and/or ammunition is required to complete a *Self Identification Form* (DPR 954).**

8. Duty Statements

The district volunteer coordinator or designee should develop duty statements for each and every volunteer position. Duty statements should identify the tasks, time commitment, performance standards, supervisory chain of command, and any training or skills required for each position. A single duty statement may be used for a particular category of volunteers, such as docents or hosts. Every long-term volunteer should have a duty statement on file with his or her VSA.

Development of duty statements is discussed in Part II of these guidelines, and samples are included in the Appendix.

Proper screening, interviewing, and placement are essential to program success, and required by Government Code Section §3119. These procedures are further discussed in Part II.

Policy Note: Duty Statement Preparation

It is the responsibility of the volunteer coordinator to prepare, or have prepared, duty statements for each volunteer position before the volunteer begins service and to assure that volunteers understand their duties and responsibilities.

D. Registering Volunteers (See Appendix for forms.)

Volunteers must be registered prior to performing their volunteer service. Individual district and park program needs will dictate the length of time that volunteers are needed. Volunteer status will be either short-term (one-time programs of three or fewer days) or long-term (ongoing work status of over three days). Once a status determination is made, the district superintendent, HQ division chief, or section manager may delegate authority to register volunteers to the district or unit volunteer coordinator, unless confidential information such as social security number, driver's license number, or date of birth is included on the forms.

1. Short-term Volunteers

Short-term volunteers are limited to working three consecutive days on special projects such as annual trail maintenance projects, beach cleanups and other CSP-sponsored special events. Short-term volunteers (except for juveniles) are registered using the *Special Project Sign-In* (DPR 208G). Juvenile volunteers must be registered using either a *Parental Permission* (DPR 208C) or a *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208B). Juveniles who are siblings may be registered on a single DPR 208C.

Registering Short-term Volunteers

To help ensure “knowing consent” (regarding non-provision of workers’ compensation insurance and tort liability coverage), five steps must be taken by staff during short-term volunteer registration:

- (1) Make sure that the disclaimer information on form DPR 208G is available to all volunteers, either by distributing or posting copies.
- (2) Instruct each volunteer to read the disclaimer information on the *Special Project Sign-In* form.
- (3) Read aloud to the prospective volunteers, either individually or as a group, the entire disclaimer text printed on the *Special Project Sign-In* form.
- (4) Instruct each volunteer to print and sign his or her name on the sheet.
- (5) Provide an opportunity for each participant to ask questions.

2. Long-term Volunteers

Long-term volunteers (who work more than 3 days) are scheduled specific work hours by their district volunteer coordinator and are registered using the *Volunteer Service Agreement* (VSA) (DPR 208). A duty statement must be attached to the VSA. Work hours per day/week for juvenile volunteers are limited by labor law (see section for Juveniles under “Volunteer Eligibility”). A *Health Questionnaire* is required of all long-term volunteers and a Background Check may be required depending upon the duties, such as working alone with juveniles or handling State funds.

Registering Long-term Volunteers

- (1) Have the volunteer complete the first four lines of the VSA, along with the Emergency Notification section.
- (2) Social security and driver's license numbers and date of birth should only be requested if required, such as for a background check or driving record, because inclusion of this information makes the document "confidential."
- (3) Review the service agreement, including work location and duty statement, with the volunteer.
- (4) Have the agreement signed by volunteer and department representative.
- (5) Attach the duty statement to the VSA.
- (6) Make copies for the volunteer.
- (7) Utilize the periodic evaluation summary to record performance and to document changes in assignment.

Policy Note: Updating VSAs

The VSA (DPR 208) does not need to be completed on an annual basis, although information on the form must be kept up to date.

3. Organized Group Volunteers

Organized group volunteers are those who are affiliated with recognized groups such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, civic and nonprofit organizations, and corporations or small businesses. Organized groups complete the *Volunteer Group Services Agreement* (DPR 208B). The organized group provides proof of workers' compensation insurance for each of its participants and agrees to work under the direction of a specified DPR representative. Volunteers from informal organizations which do not carry liability insurance coverage must be registered either as long-term volunteers on the DPR 208, or as short-term volunteers using the DPR 208G.

Policy Note: Registering Juvenile Volunteers

- (a) Juvenile volunteers are registered differently than adult volunteers. Groups of juveniles can be registered by completing the *Volunteer Group Service Agreement* (DPR 208B) and providing a roster of all participants with names, addresses and phone numbers.
- (b) Individual juveniles who are not part of a group should complete the *Parental/Guardian Permission* form (DPR 208C) in addition to the *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208).

4. Camp Host Program Volunteers

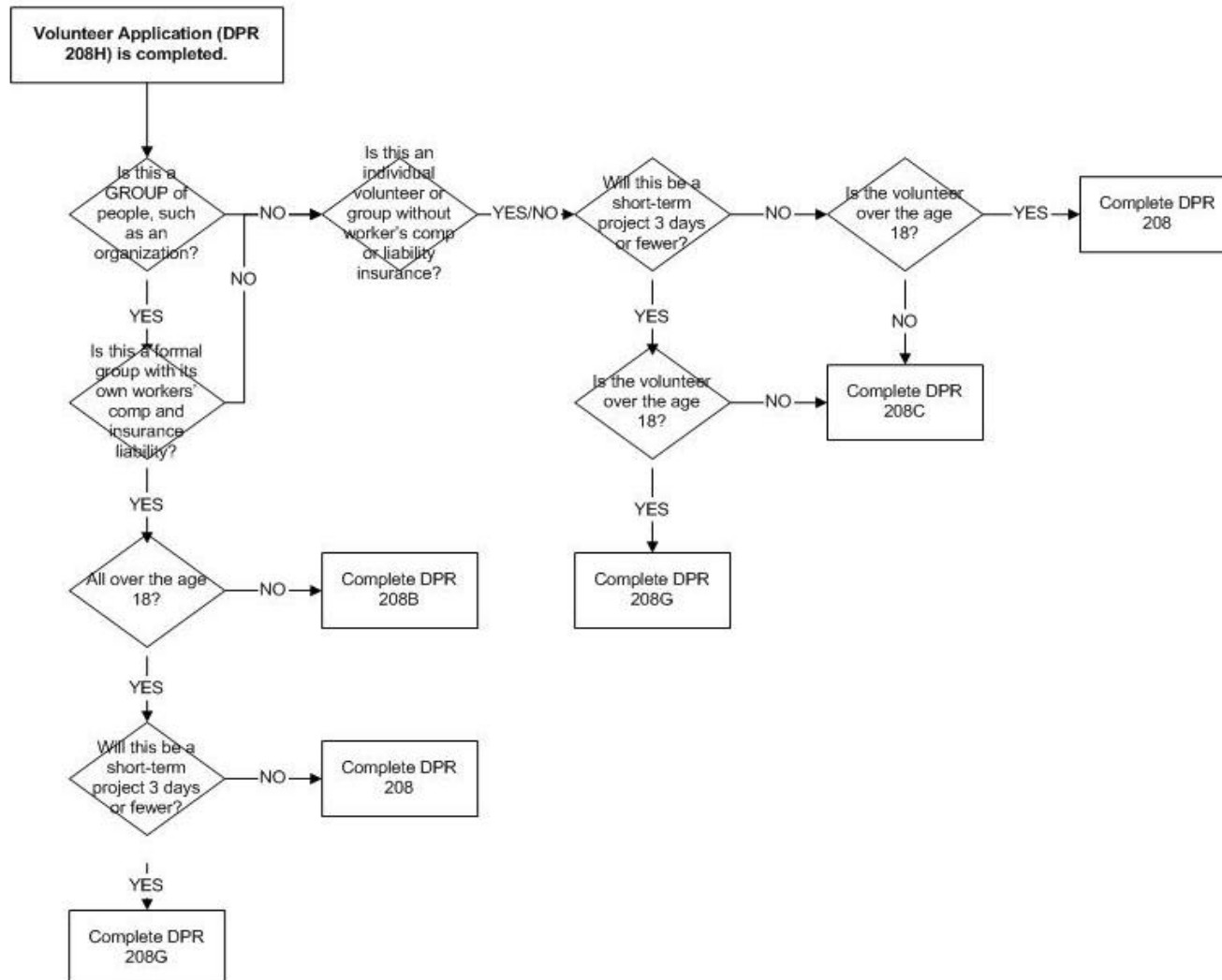
Camp hosts are individuals who temporarily reside in a campground, providing basic campground operational services and information to the public. Camp hosts also assist with many other duties including staffing visitor centers and giving nature tours. Camp hosts must individually complete a *State Parks Volunteer Application* (DPR 208H) and are registered using the *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208). Each camp host must have a completed background check and health questionnaire before they may begin service. (See "Section C: Volunteer Eligibility.")

Policy Note: Camp Host

- (a) Camp host positions are temporary and not meant to provide semi-permanent homes for individuals in state park campgrounds. Therefore, camp hosts may serve a maximum of six months annually in any single campground. If no other qualified applicants are available, the time limit may be extended on a month-by-month basis up to three months, if approved by the district superintendent. District superintendents may establish a shorter period of time as a maximum. All personal property must be removed when a camp host vacates the site.
- (b) A camp host using a vehicle registered outside California is required to register the vehicle in California if, during the course of its current out-of-state registration period, the vehicle is used in California for a time period that exceeds the time it is used in the state where it is registered. (See Appendix: California Vehicle Code §4000.4) For example: If a camp host's motor home has an Idaho registration that begins on January 1 and expires on December 31, and during that year it will be used for more than six months in California, the vehicle must be re-registered as a California vehicle. In order for a volunteer to be considered eligible for driving a State vehicle, they must be in possession of a valid California Driver's License.

VIP REGISTRATION FORMS FLOW CHART

FEBRUARY 2003



5. Summary of Volunteer Registration Forms

(See Appendix for copies of forms.)

Individuals:

- DPR 208 **Volunteer Service Agreement (VSA):** Required for long-term volunteers. The primary registration form when combined with a duty statement. It is also used to secure permission for background checks and to document separation/termination. (If a background check is to be done, the VSA shall not be signed by a DPR representative until the check is complete.)
- DPR 208GG **Special Project or Activity Sign-In:** Required for those volunteering for three days or less. It shall not be used for juveniles (under age 18).
- DPR 208H **State Parks Volunteer Application:** Recommended for long-term volunteers. It provides general background and skill information for appointment and initial evaluation purposes.

Groups:

- DPR 208B **Volunteer Group Services Agreement:** Required for groups and organizations with liability insurance coverage. This may be used for either short-term or long-term projects and for groups with juveniles.
- DPR 208GG **Special Project or Activity Sign-In:** Required for groups without liability insurance coverage (may not be signed by juveniles). This is for short-term projects only. The form is signed by each participant.

Juveniles:

- DPR 208CC **Parental/Guardian Permission:** Required for all juveniles (under the age of 18) for participation in any short-term or long-term volunteer projects or programs, unless they are covered by the DPR 208B (group agreement).

Special Considerations

- STD 261 **Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business:** Required before a volunteer can use a privately owned vehicle for State business. It is valid only for business specifically authorized by the volunteer coordinator.
- DPR 161 **Equipment Operators Qualification Card:** Required to ensure proper training prior to the operation of any State vehicle or equipment.
- STD 689 **Oath of Allegiance:** Required only for those volunteers who will be eligible to collect travel and per diem allowances as part of their official duties.

Co-Sponsored Events

DPR 208CC Parental/Guardian Permission (CSPF Co-Sponsored Events):

Required for all juveniles (under the age of 18) for participation in any short-term or long-term volunteer project or program co-sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation.

DPR 208GG Special Project or Activity Sign-In (CSPF Co-Sponsored Events):

Required for those volunteering for three days or fewer on short term projects co-sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation only. The form is to be signed by each participant. It shall not be used for juveniles (under age 18).

E. Workers' Compensation Insurance and Tort Liability

No work is so important that it should be undertaken in an unsafe manner, which may result in injury. Besides the obvious pain and lost work time, such incidents can result in costly workers' compensation claims. Further, unsafe actions of a volunteer which result in injuries to another volunteer or to a park visitor can result in tort claims filed against the volunteer and the Department. Understanding the Department's workers' compensation and tort liability policies is important to proper management of every volunteer program.

1. Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation insurance is a State mandated benefit provided by employers to their employees. Although volunteers are not state employees, they are covered under this program. This program provides compensation for physical injuries and other medically related disabilities occurring within the course and scope of the volunteer position. For example, if a properly trained mountain bike patrol volunteer, while performing his or her officially assigned duties, falls and breaks an arm, that injury will generally be covered by the Department's workers' compensation program. Each claim is reviewed on a case by case basis to determine eligibility.

DPR will cover long-term volunteers for workers' compensation insurance when such volunteers are properly registered (approved DPR 208) and working within the scope of their assigned duties. Short-term volunteers (three days or fewer), registered via the *Special Project or Activity Sign-In* (approved DPR 208G), are not covered by workers' compensation insurance.

2. Tort Liability

Tort liability, as applied to volunteer management, is generally defined as an action by a volunteer, which results in personal injury to another person or damage to the property of another. When a volunteer is acting within the accepted limits and scope of his or her assigned job responsibilities, the Department may be required to assume responsibility for tort liability claims against a short-term or long-term volunteer's actions which may have done harm to an individual or to their personal property. For example, if a volunteer, while performing officially assigned duties, accidentally leaves a shovel in a trail, and subsequently a visitor trips over the shovel and breaks his leg, a lawsuit that the injured party brings against the volunteer will generally be defended and covered by DPR. The Department's obligation to cover a volunteer in any particular instance is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Policy Note: Liability Questions

Specific questions regarding volunteer workers' compensation and tort liability issues which cannot be answered by (district) administrative staff should be directed to the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

Policy Note: Court Referrals

Court referrals are **NOT** VIPs, and VIP sign-up documents are not authorized for use with court referrals. When court-referred individuals are used in state park units, the assigning court authority (county or city) is considered the general employer, with the State being the special and secondary employer. Therefore, the county or city assumes workers' compensation and tort liability responsibility. The contract or MOU with the assigning court authority must acknowledge this liability relationship prior to court referrals' working in state park units. Specific exceptions may be made by a division chief, in which case the *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208) may be used. (Based on *Linda Arriaga v. County of Alameda et al.*: 9 Cal. 4th 1055, 892 P.2d 150, 40 Cal.Rptr.2d 116)

3. College Interns

College interns who volunteer their time and are registered as long-term volunteers (DPR 208) will be covered by workers' compensation and tort liability, subject to case review and acceptance, through DPR. College students whose salaries are paid by outside entities (a university or college foundation, e.g.) are covered by workers' compensation through the entity with which they are affiliated and are not volunteers.

F. Risk Management

The reduction of on-the-job accident-related injuries to volunteers is the responsibility of all DPR employees and volunteers. Specific risk management strategies that must be incorporated into volunteer programs include:

- Proper supervision: Both a legal requirement and a good management tool, effective supervision helps ensure that the volunteer program continues to meet its goals.
- Ongoing training: To ensure that all volunteers are well versed in safe work practices, initial and ongoing training is mandatory. Additionally, advanced training must be completed, and records maintained, for volunteers involved in more specialized or potentially hazardous work, such as operating power tools.
- Sign-in Process: Provide adequate documentation as to when volunteers are on duty.
- Safety equipment: Provide appropriate safety equipment for each volunteer and require the proper use of the equipment.
- Accident reports: Immediately report all accidents and injuries on authorized forms, and thoroughly investigate and document the circumstances surrounding the accident.
- Ongoing analysis: All accidents and injuries must be investigated to determine what factors, conditions or practices contributed to the incidents, so proper and timely actions can be taken to prevent or reduce the risk of reoccurrence.

Risk management imposes constraints on certain types of volunteer work assignments. While volunteers must observe the same safety precautions as employees, any use of volunteers in jobs considered hazardous for state employees (such as fire fighting) must be carefully evaluated. The following policies apply:

- (a) Volunteers shall not perform physical law enforcement activities, nor shall they be assigned to duties that place them in life-threatening situations, even as observers.
- (b) Volunteers shall not be assigned to do work that they do not feel comfortable completing, or do not willingly agree to perform.
- (c) The district/HQ must provide adequate first aid training and proper equipment and communicable disease protection to all volunteers whose duty statements specifically include administering first aid services to visitors, staff, or other volunteers.
- (d) Volunteers who are assigned to operate equipment or machinery must first demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the volunteer coordinator or qualified employee, proficiency in the safe operation of the equipment or machinery and a thorough understanding of all applicable safety measures. Volunteers must be at least age 18 to drive a vehicle or to operate equipment capable of causing serious bodily harm.

G. Equipment, Vehicle Use and State Housing

1. Use of State Equipment and Vehicles

Volunteers whose duty statements require it may operate State equipment and motor vehicles on State business when authorized by the district superintendent, HQ division chief, section manager, or designee.

Prior to a volunteer operating a State vehicle, the district superintendent or designee must:

- a) Verify that the volunteer has a valid California driver's license and is at least 18 years old.
- b) Request a driving record check on volunteers who will be driving State or private vehicles on official State business.
- c) Properly brief each volunteer on proper vehicle operation, maintenance and safety, including seat belt use and accident reporting requirements.
- d) Administer a driver's test, which must be passed for each type of vehicle to be operated.
- e) Require that each volunteer maintain a current *Equipment Operators Qualification Card* (DPR 161) for any vehicle or special equipment (chain saws, power tools, tire changing equipment, etc.) to be operated.
- f) Not allow a volunteer to operate law enforcement or emergency vehicles unless the vehicle is clearly marked "out of service."

Policy Note: Drug Testing

When operating State vehicles and equipment, and when authorized to operate private equipment and vehicles on State business, volunteers are subject to the same legal and administrative requirements as DPR employees. (Refer to Departmental Notice 97-21 in the Appendix.)

2. Special License Requirements

Any volunteer who operates a State vehicle (or a personal vehicle on State business) which requires a special operators license such as a Class A or B driver's license, must also adhere to DPR policy regarding drug testing. (Refer to DOM and Departmental Notice 97-21 in the Appendix for more information.)

3. Use of Privately Owned Vehicles

Volunteers may use their privately owned vehicles on State business if authorized by the district superintendent or her or his designee. An *Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business* (STD 261) must be approved by the district superintendent (or the section/division chief in headquarters) prior to the use of any privately owned vehicle by a volunteer. A valid driver's license is required if driving on State business.

4. Private Vehicle Insurance Liability

Under California Vehicle Code (CVC) §17151, the driver of a vehicle has the primary liability for accidents arising out of maintenance or use of that vehicle. Private vehicle accidents must be reported to the volunteer driver's insurance company. The driver's insurance company is obligated to provide defense and indemnification for claims, up to the limits prescribed in CVC §17150 and §17151 in the Appendix. State liability, if any, is secondary.

5. Vehicle Accidents

Accidents involving volunteers using their personal vehicles on authorized State business must be reported on a *Report of Vehicle Accident* (STD 270) to the driver's insurance company and to the Department of General Services, Office of Risk and Insurance Management, 1325 J Street, Suite 1800, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 376-5300. The Office of Risk and Insurance Management administers the State motor vehicle liability self-insurance program.

Policy Note: Automobile Accidents

- (a) All automobile accidents that in any way involve personal injury or property damage to others must be reported within 48 hours on a *Report of Vehicle Accident* (STD 270) (attach 5 copies). The completed report must be signed by the operator and approved by the district superintendent/manager or designee.
- (b) Accidents resulting in any injury to persons other than volunteers or employees, or involving serious damage to the property of others, must be reported immediately by telephone to the Office of Risk and Insurance Management at (916) 376-5300.

6. Use of Personal Property

Volunteers should be discouraged from using personal property or equipment while conducting State business. Should any personal property such as vehicles, computers, binoculars, cameras, flashlights, and bicycles, be lost, damaged or stolen while being used on State business, the State cannot be held liable.

Volunteers shall not borrow State equipment for personal use. Such unauthorized use of State-owned equipment may result in termination of a volunteer's active status.

7. State Housing and Facilities

Volunteers may be lodged in State housing/facilities, subject to rental charges and utility costs at fair market value, in accordance with approved policies as indicated in the Departmental Operations Manual. (Also refer to Departmental Notice 95-12 in the Appendix and the DPR Housing Policy and Guidelines.)

H. Expense Claims

Volunteers are responsible for any personal costs incurred through their services to DPR. However, the district superintendent, division chief, section manager, or designee may authorize the Department's reimbursement of expenses to volunteers. Prior to incurring such costs, volunteers shall have on file:

- 1) An approved *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208).
- 2) A completed *Oath of Allegiance* (STD 689).
- 3) An approved *Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business* (STD 261) if vehicle mileage is claimed.

Policy Note: Travel Expenses

For reimbursement of travel-related expenses, travel must be listed as a specific duty in the volunteer's duty statement.

I. Volunteer Uniforms

As representatives of the Department, volunteers are responsible for presenting a favorable image to visitors and should dress appropriately. The primary consideration regarding uniforms is that volunteers working in public contact situations are easily recognized as official DPR representatives. However, the diversity of duties performed by volunteers and the variety of geographic locations and weather conditions do not allow for a single style of authorized uniform to be worn.

Districts are encouraged to develop district-wide dress codes that will guide volunteers in selecting and wearing clothing that is clean, in good repair, and appropriate. While volunteers may not wear the standard DPR uniform, several officially sanctioned departmental insignia and uniform accessories are available for wear when approved by the district superintendent. For information about the availability and cost of these uniform items, contact the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

1. Volunteer Patch

A volunteer patch is available from the Volunteer Programs Coordinator. It is similar in design to the official California State Parks uniform shoulder patch, with the addition of the word "VOLUNTEER" at the top of the patch. It is preferable for patches to be sewn centered and 3/4-inch below the shoulder seam on both sleeves. If only one volunteer patch is to be worn, it should be worn on the left sleeve.

For sleeveless vests, the patch should be sewn on the left breast pocket (or in the approximate area of the garment where a breast pocket would normally be located.) Other locations for the patch may be approved by the district superintendent.

Volunteer Patch

Actual size



2. Volunteer Nametag

An official plastic nametag is available and its use is encouraged, especially for docents wearing period costumes where the volunteer patch is not appropriate. An exception may be made to wearing a nametag during living history programs when such historically inaccurate adornment may appear inappropriate. District superintendents may also authorize volunteers to wear the standard nametags worn by seasonal and permanent staff.



Volunteer Nametag
Actual size

3. Volunteer and Camp Host Hats and Visors

VIP visors and baseball-style caps are available and may be worn as uniform items. They are made of khaki colored canvas and are embroidered with the department logo and the word "Volunteer" or "Host."

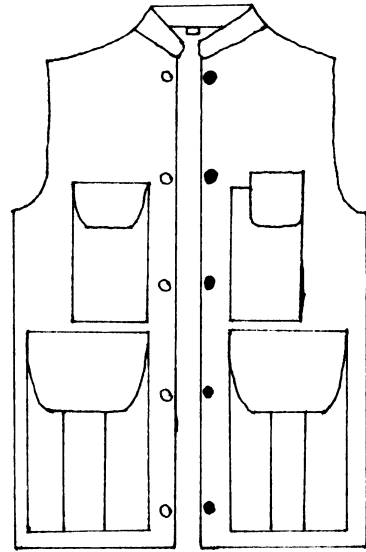


Policy Notes: Uniforms

- (a) The district superintendent may authorize the wearing or display of specially designed individual park unit patches and name and hour tags for use by volunteers. Such patches and nametags shall not include any advertisement or promotion of any organization including nonprofit or commercial corporations.
- (b) Volunteers are not authorized to wear official DPR uniforms, ranger Stetsons or badges (or facsimiles).

4. Volunteer Vests

DPR does not have a standard uniform vest for volunteers. However, many park units choose a multi-purpose khaki colored vest manufactured by Prison Industries for their volunteers. The vest is made from a poly cotton blend material. It has four pockets with Velcro closures, a collar, and five snap closures down the front. The vests come in sizes Small to 4XL and are currently priced at approximately \$25.00; silk-screening is available for an additional fee. To order, contact Prison Industries at (916) 358-2727 and ask for the "Fish and Game Vest - Khaki Twill," order # 4887.



Volunteer Vest

5. Period Attire

Period attire that allows the public to recognize a volunteer's official capacity should be worn without the volunteer patch. If appropriate, a volunteer nametag may be worn on the outside of period clothing.

Each park unit has a unique interpretive period, and volunteers should conform to the park's established guidelines regarding period dress.



J. Volunteer Recognition

Appropriate recognition is a vital ingredient for retaining valuable volunteers, thus ensuring quality programs while reducing the need for ongoing recruitment and training. Refer to Part II, section E and Appendix I, "Resource Information for Volunteer Coordinators" for more information about recognition.

1. Volunteer Park Passes

There are two types of passes for volunteers: the VIP District Pass and the Statewide Pass. (See Appendix regarding passes and required forms.) VIP district passes are made available to active volunteers as a way of ensuring easy and free access into the state park in which they are volunteering and encouraging them to spend more time learning about other parks in their district. For volunteers who contribute at least 200 hours of their time each year, a statewide day use pass is made available, both as a way to thank them for their work and to encourage their further exploration of the state park system.

Policy Note: Statewide Pass

Hours worked as a volunteer or employee of a state park cooperating association may not be counted toward the 200 hours of State volunteer time required for a statewide pass. Only those hours worked directly as a DPR volunteer, under the *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208) and duty statement, may accrue for purposes of earning the statewide pass.

Policy Note: Complimentary Passes

Complimentary passes (DPR 903A and DPR 903B) may be awarded by specific management staff in special circumstances when there is some direct benefit to the Department. For more information, consult the Cooperating Associations Program Manager, Interpretation and Education Division at (916) 654-5397. (Refer to Departmental Notice 97-42 in the Appendix.)

a) VIP District Passes (DPR 208F)

The annual district pass may be made available at the district level to all volunteers who meet the minimum work requirements for maintaining active volunteer status, as established by the district superintendent. The pass allows the volunteer free day-use access to all of the district's state park units for the current calendar year. The pass may be ordered directly through the Volunteer Programs Coordinator using a completed *Accountable Documents Requisition* (DPR 145).

b) VIP Statewide Pass (DPR 208E)

The annual statewide pass is valid for one calendar year and may be issued to VIPs who have worked a minimum of 200 hours during the previous calendar year. (Service time cannot be accrued over different years). The pass allows the volunteer day-use access to all state park units, with the exception of Hearst Castle and other units as determined by management.

To order passes, send a completed and signed *Accountable Documents Requisition* (DPR 145) to the Volunteer Programs Coordinator. Passes may be ordered at any time during the year, but they should be requested in early December to have them ready for volunteers by January. (See Appendix for sample passes and forms.)

Policy Note: Camp Host Hours

Camp host hours accrue at a rate of five hours per day worked in the volunteer's capacity unless otherwise determined by the volunteer coordinator. The hours worked by spouses may be combined to meet the 200-hour pass requirement. If additional "non-host" volunteer hours are worked, such additional time may also be counted for each individual host.

Policy Note: Inactive Volunteers

Inactive volunteers do not enjoy privileges or benefits beyond those of regular state park visitors. District passes should be turned in upon separation. However, an inactive volunteer's 200-hour statewide pass earned for the previous year's work will remain valid and should be retained by the volunteer.

2. Processing and Using Passes

a) Issuing District and Statewide Passes to Volunteers

Before issuing a pass to a volunteer, the district must type or legibly print the volunteer's name on the pass. If possible, the issuance of 200-hour statewide passes should be combined with a ceremony or festive event. If the passes are mailed to the volunteers, it is a good practice to enclose a brief, personal note expressing the Department's appreciation for their efforts. Use *Record of Passes Issued Form* (DPR 308A) to keep track of volunteer passes.

b) Issuing 200-Hour Passes During Current Mid-Year

Once a volunteer has worked 200 or more qualifying hours in a calendar year, he or she may be issued a statewide pass. However, if a statewide pass is issued for the current year's 200 hours of volunteer work, an additional 200 hours must be worked in the current year (400 hours total) in order to be eligible for the 200-hour statewide pass for the next year.

c) Volunteer Use of District and Statewide Passes

Volunteer passes are not transferable to other people, so when a volunteer presents his or her pass upon entering any state park unit, a valid form of identification should also be shown to the kiosk attendant. In those state park units with unstaffed kiosks or "iron rangers," the pass should be displayed in plain view on the vehicle's dashboard. In this situation it is **not** necessary to display an ID on the dashboard or to leave it at the kiosk.

Policy Note: Passes are Accountable Documents

VIP passes (DPR 208E and DPR 208F) are accountable documents, and as such, documentation is required for each pass distributed. VIP passes will be issued to the person in the district responsible for accountable documents. For auditing purposes, the district volunteer coordinator shall maintain a list of volunteers (on DPR 308A) who are issued VIP passes. For passes ordered but not used, DOM §1425 and Departmental Notice 96-26 (in the Appendix) specify the required procedures for end-of-the year accounting and disposal.

VIP STATEWIDE PASS DPR 208E



VIP DISTRICT PASS DPR 208F



3. Awards and Honors

In addition to the passes, the Department has several awards available for recognizing volunteers and the work they perform.

a) Unit and District Awards

District superintendents are encouraged to develop formal district and individual park unit volunteer award programs. Categories of unit and district awards can be created and certificates or awards designed to recognize individual and team efforts of varying degrees of significance.

b) Department Awards

There are two awards available through the statewide Volunteer Programs Coordinator. Please use application forms (DPR 208I, 208J) to submit nominations. (See Appendix for application forms and samples of the awards.)

(1) Poppy Award

The Poppy Award was created to recognize exceptional volunteer service and is available through the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

Who is eligible?	All Department volunteers (individuals only).
Who can nominate?	Any Department employee.
Criteria for nomination:	Any individual volunteer who significantly contributes to the betterment of California State Parks.
Selection process:	Nominator prepares application form for review and recommendation by the district volunteer coordinator and superintendent and approval by the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.
Description:	The award is an 8 1/2" x 11" certificate with gold lettering and pale orange poppies. There is a place for the volunteer's name, a short description of their contributions, and a signature block for the district/sector superintendent or division chief.
Suggested presentation:	The award should be presented framed and/or matted. Inexpensive jackets are also available from stationery suppliers.

Please allow at least 2-weeks' lead time for processing the Poppy Award.

(2) Volunteer Medallion for Superior Achievement

This is the Department's highest level award that specifically recognizes outstanding volunteer service.

Who is eligible?	All Department volunteers or teams of volunteers.
Who can nominate?	Any Department employee or volunteer.
Criteria for nomination:	An individual volunteer or a team of volunteers who makes a significant contribution toward the mission and goals of the Department. Efforts recognized by this Medallion should be substantial in impact and worthy of recognition at the Director's level. Generally, volunteer efforts should be first recognized at the district/division/section level, or with a Poppy Award prior to nomination for the Medallion.
Selection process:	Nominator prepares application to be reviewed and approved by the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.
Description:	Two brass medallions and a certificate signed by the Director in a gold-imprinted blue leather case.
Suggested presentation:	This recognition award generally is presented by the Deputy Director for Park Operations or other deputy director, as appropriate.

Please allow at least 3-weeks' lead time for processing the Medallion.

K. Separation

Volunteers may decide to end their service for a wide range of reasons, including the completion of a specific project, relocation to another area, personal or family obligations, or a career/job change. When volunteer services are terminated, a *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208) should be signed by both the supervisor and the volunteer, although the volunteer's signature is not required. A notation summarizing the reasons for separation, and any letter of resignation, should be attached to the VSA for future reference.

DPR is not obligated to keep any volunteer, and volunteers may be terminated without cause. If necessary, the supervisor can terminate the agreement if the volunteer repeatedly fails to fulfill his or her responsibilities as specified on the VSA and duty statement, or if he or she violates Department policies related to discrimination or harassment, or if he or she is not performing satisfactorily.

Policy Note: Termination

The needs of the Department and/or the volunteer may change or end. Therefore, either DPR or the volunteer may terminate the *Volunteer Services Agreement* at any time and without cause. It remains both the prerogative and the responsibility of the district superintendent/chief/ manager to determine whether a specific volunteer or volunteer group is appropriate to the needs and requirements of the Department. DPR is not required to accept or retain any person who volunteers his/her services.

It can be helpful to the volunteer program to conduct an exit interview when an individual terminates service. (See Appendix for suggested exit interview form.)

If the volunteer intends to use his or her work experience as a means of qualifying for another job, the volunteer may request and the supervisor may provide a letter verifying the type of work performed.

Policy Note: Separation Documentation

The VSA and its attached documentation, including the duty statement, must be retained for five years following a volunteer's separation.

L. Annual Volunteer Program Activity Reports

1. VIP Annual Program Activity Report (District)

Each district volunteer coordinator should submit an Annual District Volunteer Activities Program Report, which will include a summation of each of their respective parks' volunteer programs. The report should be submitted on the *Volunteers In Parks Annual Program Activity Report* form (a copy is included in the Appendix) or on a computer-generated report of similar format. The report is due to the Volunteer Programs Manager annually by **February 1**.

2. Annual VIP Report (Statewide)

The Volunteer Programs Coordinator will prepare and submit to Park Stewardship an *Annual VIP Report*. The calendar year report will include total volunteer hours (by category) provided in each district, including a narrative synopsis of the previous year's program highlights and problems, as well as general goals for the coming year.

M. Cooperating Associations and Volunteers

Some of the most important nonprofit organizations that support California State Parks are the cooperating associations. Their boards and members support individual state parks in many ways, particularly financially. Cooperating associations are federally recognized nonprofit corporations established to financially aid the interpretive and educational activities of the state park unit(s) for which they were formed.

The policies and procedures for the Cooperating Associations Program are fully discussed in a separate document, the cooperating associations program guidelines, and the program is managed separately by the Cooperating Associations Program Manager.

The separation of the Volunteers In Parks and Cooperating Associations programs occurred as a result of the 1989 Department Task Force that evaluated these programs to determine how they could best be managed to resolve a number of issues regarding risk management, liability, program responsibility and control. These issues had been raised by legislators, attorneys, auditors and control agencies after serious problems became matters of public discussion. While the volunteer program and cooperating associations program are related to each other and connected to DPR, they are all best managed when roles and responsibilities are clear, appropriate and legal.

It is Department policy that, whenever possible, district superintendents assign the duties of volunteer program coordinator and liaison to the cooperating associations to two different staff members. This helps reduce confusion about organizational roles and responsibilities, and ensures a legal and clear administrative separation between cooperating associations and volunteers.

Policy Note: CAL

To reduce confusion concerning organizational roles and responsibilities, and to ensure a clear administrative separation between cooperating associations and volunteer programs, the Department employee holding the district volunteer coordinator position shall not concurrently hold the cooperating association liaison (CAL) position.

Exceptions must be approved by the district superintendent.

Policy Note: Complimentary Passes

Complimentary passes may be issued to board members of recognized cooperating associations who have served for one year or more as a method of thanking them for their contributions. For more information, consult the Cooperating Associations Program Manager, Interpretation and Education Division.

Policy Note: Association Membership

Cooperating association members may sign up and serve as DPR volunteers. Department volunteers need not be members of a cooperating association or any other organization. The difference between Department volunteers and association members/volunteers needs to be clearly defined. For liability reasons, volunteers must follow the sign-in process established by the district. This helps establish a better understanding of the difference between volunteering for the Department and volunteering for the association.

N. Funding Sources for Volunteer Programs

1. The **Volunteer Enhancement Program** (VEP) has been an invaluable source of financial support for volunteer efforts. This fund, when available, provides funding for projects which enhance the Department's volunteer programs and expand the interpretive and educational opportunities within state parks. Proposition 12 allotted \$4 million for VEP projects for the 2001/2002 fiscal year.

When funds are available, the VEP Coordinator (in the Interpretation and Education Division) will access the Park Infrastructure Database (PID) to review projects for eligibility. All projects that need funding must be entered by the district into the PID to be considered. Each district has a VEP coordinator to disseminate VEP information to the district. VEP coordinators also monitor, track and report VEP expenditures to the Interpretation and Education Division. Depending on district needs the VEP coordinator's role can be assigned to the administrative officer, maintenance chief, interpretive specialist, volunteer coordinator, or other position.

2. The **Ranger Lane Fund** is administered by the California State Parks Foundation. The Fund is specifically for state park projects and programs that involve the efforts of volunteers. With the approval of the district superintendent, state park staff, volunteers and cooperating associations can apply. Projects must benefit the department's volunteer programs. Grants range from \$500 to \$5,000 (most are in the \$500 to \$2,500 range) and be submitted at any time.

To apply, send a one to two page request explaining the Who, What, Where and Why of the proposal to:

Marketing and Development Manager
CA State Parks Foundation
P.O. Box 548
Kentfield, CA 94914
(415) 258-9975

3. **Cooperating Associations** provide support to volunteer programs by supplying a variety of items such as interpretive aids/materials, costumes, and equipment. Many associations also provide funding/support for training, special events and interpretive programs.
4. **The State Parks Foundation** also provides funds for Earth Day events. Call (415) 258-9975 for more information.

PART II

Managing a Volunteer Program

The previous section (Part I) of the *Volunteers In Parks Program Guidelines* addressed the technical aspects of administering a volunteer program and outlined policies and legal requirements pertaining to the Department's program. This section (Part II) offers practical advice to help you decide if a volunteer program will be beneficial to your program. Once that decision is made, it provides guidance on how to create and organize a Volunteers In Parks Program.

A. Starting a New Program

1. Staff Support

Many components must come together to create and maintain an efficient and cost-effective volunteer program, not the least of which is staff support. It is vital to the success of every volunteer program that all staff—visitor services, maintenance, and administration—be included at every step, from identifying and assessing initial needs, to planning, implementing, and managing the ongoing program. This not only helps to ensure that each employee is aware of the potential benefits of a volunteer program, but also that he or she is aware of the associated demands that may be part of administering the myriad aspects of any volunteer program.

2. Problem Identification and Selection

If you can't identify the problem, then it's impossible to know when or if you've found the right solution.

Every unit within the Department has the need to improve public service, the need to better protect resources, the need to achieve financial solvency, and the need to make the public more aware of the importance of state parks to society, the economy, and individual well being. If, for example, too many mountain bikers are being injured and there are no additional State funds for patrolling, what can be done to better protect the public? What alternatives are available if surveys show that most visitors would like additional interpretive programs and no State money exists to increase staff? What can be done if additional manpower is needed to implement a resource management program to protect snowy plover nesting grounds?



Many things must be considered if your volunteer program is going to be valuable to staff, your volunteers, and you.

The way to meet each of these identified needs could be the design and implementation of a Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program. By following these six steps of the basic problem-solving process, you can better determine if volunteers are the best way to meet your needs:

- 1) Identify the problem
- 2) Analyze the problem
- 3) Generate potential solutions
- 4) Select and plan the solution
- 5) Implement the solution
- 6) Evaluate the effectiveness of the solution

The above process can be applied in two different situations: at districts/units that do not have a VIP program and wish to develop one, and at districts/units that already have VIP programs and wish to expand the use of their volunteers.

3. Starting Small

The problem-solving process is designed to make positive changes incrementally. In other words, any change should not be viewed as a one-time answer to an identified problem because there is generally more than one solution. In places where the volunteer program is new, there are always problems to resolve and processes to develop. It is usually best to begin with small volunteer projects and programs, then expand them as staff becomes familiar with duties and the program is fully thought out.

4. Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is a formal investigation of how (and if) volunteers can help and what types of volunteer skills are needed. This ongoing evaluation should include all park staff, because any volunteer program, while having the potential for increasing the effectiveness of the public services in a unit, also may create unanticipated demands upon staff time and impacts on funding.

A volunteer needs assessment should include a list of all the desired tasks, projects or activities not performed by staff members. Also worth noting are those tasks currently performed by staff where assistance is needed.

The list may additionally include those staff activities, which might be performed by volunteers when staff are off-duty. But remember, volunteers cannot be used to replace permanent staff – only to support and assist staff with their responsibilities. The list should be both comprehensive and specific, including everything from emptying trash cans to processing the mail. Tasks or projects that require specific training or skills not found in existing staff should also be included.



Coordination among ALL staff is essential for the success of volunteer programs.

Review your list and rank the items according to the commitment of time required on the part of staff to train and supervise volunteers to perform the task. Priorities can then be established based on the park unit's needs and the levels of support that are available.

5. Duty Statement

Once the needs assessment has been completed, duty statements need to be developed that outline specific volunteer duty responsibilities, performance standards, and supervisory chain of command. It is the responsibility of the district volunteer coordinator, delegated if appropriate to the unit or program volunteer coordinator, to develop clear and concise volunteer duty statements for every position or function.

Duty statements should identify the task that will be performed and the time commitment that is required. They should define the specific skills and knowledge needed to do a job safely and effectively, including the initial and ongoing training that will be needed to ensure that job performance standards are met. The person or position to whom the volunteer reports should also be included. It is important that the duty statement be clearly written and that each volunteer thoroughly understands his or her responsibilities.


Often several volunteers are needed for a specific job in order to assure proper coverage. In such cases, a single standard duty statement may be written for a number of volunteers. For example, a standard program duty statement could be used to detail the responsibilities, the supervisory chain of command and the performance standards for camp hosts at all campgrounds within a district, as long as the duties and standards are the same at each facility.

The duty statement must either be attached to the individual's *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208) or referenced on the form if it is used for several volunteer positions.

A typical outline for a duty statement would include the following items:

1. Title
2. Purpose
3. Duties/Responsibilities
4. Skills/Qualifications
5. Time commitment
6. Training
7. Reporting
8. Benefits

Sample Duty Statement/ Recruitment Flyer

 BEAR STATE PARK VOLUNTEER PROGRAM	
Title:	Camp Host
Purpose:	To serve as a visible representative of California State Parks in the campground, and to assist park staff with visitors and maintenance.
Duties:	Greet visitors and provide assistance and information; perform light janitorial duties; encourage compliance with park rules and regulations; collect fees and sell firewood.
Skills/Qualifications:	Campground hosts must be willing to help and physically able to carry out their duties, have a positive and enthusiastic attitude, and an ability to learn park regulations and procedures. Hosts must be willing to wear prescribed uniform and conform to Park Service appearance standards.
Reports To:	Chief Ranger
Time:	4 to 5 hours per day, five days a week; on call 24 hours a day to assist park staff.
Benefits:	Camp hosts receive a free campsite with the following hookups: electricity, water, and sewer. Hosts are also given a district day use pass to see and explore other units within the district. Camp hosts may attend training sessions related to their duties.
*For more information:	Name, Title Phone Number, Address, and/or Fax and E-Mail

*If used for recruiting add contact name and number

Sample duty statements are included in the Appendix.

6. Work Environment

Establishing a positive work environment helps create a feeling of cooperation and mutual respect between volunteers and staff. You can create and maintain a good working environment by being friendly, greeting volunteers by name, thanking them, and – above all – treating them with respect. It is important that each volunteer be made to feel comfortable and made aware of any written and unwritten “ground rules” that may be in effect. Also, share and rotate monotonous work among volunteers so you won’t lose trained and qualified people who become bored with their task.

A few things that might be provided for volunteers include a break room (which may be shared with staff), a place where they can store valuables such as purses and jackets, parking spaces, and a night escort to the parking lot, if requested. Some volunteers might feel uncomfortable asking for such things, so it is better to provide information about amenities during the initial orientation.

B. Finding the Right Volunteers

1. Recruitment

Do not begin recruitment until the structure of your volunteer program is in place. This includes preparing duty statements, designating volunteer facilities, obtaining supplies, identifying training needs, etc. Then, when you begin recruiting, remember that this aspect of the VIP program requires patience and persistence, particularly in the initial stages. As time goes on, volunteers themselves will spread the word and may become one of your best resources for finding additional help.

The most effective way to recruit volunteers is by personal contact—go out and ask them. Recruiting opportunities exist at community club meetings, social functions, and church gatherings; through professional societies and senior citizen groups; at shopping malls, fairs, and conferences; through advertisements in local newspapers and on radio/TV stations; and through private businesses, industries, and other State and Federal agencies. You can search for volunteers by staffing information booths at conferences or fairs, or by serving as a guest speaker at club or organization meetings.

Another good place to look is at a local community volunteer center, which specializes in locating and placing people who are looking for volunteer opportunities. Volunteers can also be found through use of the news media. Local newspapers, radio and television public service announcements, or participation in local talk shows can reach many people.

Students are often excellent volunteers. They can be found on college campuses and reached through college clubs, student union information networks, college newspapers, job placement centers, and clubs, as well as by approaching professors who teach courses in archeology, history, recreation, anthropology and other park-related subjects. High school and elementary school-age volunteers can be found through teachers, principals, guidance counselors, and clubs. Special-interest groups, such as off-highway vehicle clubs, local hiking clubs, and Girl or Boy Scout troops, can be reached through active members.



The best recruitment is face-to-face.

You can reach a great number of people through such devices as posters, newsletter articles, or slide shows. The internet is another opportunity for getting your message out to potential volunteers. General information about volunteer opportunities in state parks has been added to the Department's home page. You too can advertise your park or unit volunteer needs in this way. Contact the Volunteer Programs Coordinator in the Interpretation and Education Division for additional information.

Finally, all of these recruiting methods must include a place (telephone number and address) and a specific person to contact for more information.

2. Selection of Volunteers

a. Screening

Proper screening, interviewing, and placement are essential to program success. Do not feel compelled to accept everyone who walks through the door. Volunteers can have a profound impact on your park or program. It is essential to screen all potential volunteers properly in order to assure that the impact they have is positive for you, the volunteer, and the public. Effective duty statements and recruitment make screening easier. The *Volunteer Application* (DPR 208H) provides the basic data needed to interview and select volunteers. In addition, an inventory of skills can be a useful tool for evaluating and placing volunteers (see the *Skills Inventory* form in the Appendix).

Remember that screening must not be based on the applicant's race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age, or sexual orientation.

The Interview Process

The objective of an interview process is to look for the most qualified person to fill a position. This requires that the interviewer plan very carefully to conduct an interview that elicits the information needed to judge each candidate's qualifications for specific assignments. Every interview has several stages:

1) Pre-Interview

Before the interview, take time to review the questions that will be asked, the duty statement, and the potential volunteer's application form. Remember to relax, because the interviewer is often just as nervous and self-conscious as the applicant. Give the applicant an opportunity to review the duty statement. Choose a location for the interview that is comfortable and free from interruptions.

2) Opening the Interview

You should make every attempt to establish rapport with the volunteer and make him or her feel at ease. Welcome the applicant, introduce everyone on the panel, and provide a brief overview of your volunteer program.

3) The Interview

A critical issue in interviewing is listening to what the candidate has to say. Allow the volunteer to answer your questions free from interruption. This is a two-way interview. Invite questions, comments, and concerns so both parties will have the information needed to make a decision whether or not the volunteer is right for the position and the position right for the volunteer. Be sure that the same questions are asked of all volunteers who apply for a specific job, although additional questions may be asked of individuals in order to clarify or amplify a point.

4) Closing the Interview

In closing, it is important to be concise and upbeat. Briefly review the interview to ensure that both parties understand the same information, and then explain to the potential volunteer what the next steps will be. Finally, thank the applicant for his or her interest and effort.

5) Reference Checks

It is a good policy to ask for references and to check those references, especially if the work your volunteer will be doing may be sensitive, such as working with money, with certain administrative documents, or with children. If the position you have to fill is not considered sensitive and you have no intention of contacting references, then don't ask for them.

6) Placement

Placement of a volunteer should be based on the information gathered in the screening process. It must be done with the consensus of both the volunteer and the supervisor.

7) Closure

Be sure to inform those not selected for the position. If possible and appropriate, find another volunteer opportunity for them to consider.

c. Developing and Structuring Questions

There are two very important questions you must ask yourself when developing questions for an interview:

1. Will the question elicit an answer that could screen out minorities or members of one gender or disqualify a significantly larger percentage of one particular group than any other group?
2. Is the information you are requesting really needed to evaluate the applicant's competence or qualifications for a specific assignment?

There are two ways to structure your questions:

1. Open-ended questions are designed to encourage the applicant to provide additional information about a certain subject. They might include the following:
 - Tell me, how would you...?
 - What did you like best about...?
 - Why are you interested in being a volunteer?
2. Restricted questions tend to elicit short answers: yes, no, or a brief response:
 - Can you work the required two days per month?
 - Are you available to work on Tuesday afternoons?
 - Do you have computer experience?

A combination of questions is usually used in an interview. Be sure to give the potential volunteer a chance to ask questions, too.

C. Becoming Familiar with the Park and the Assignment

1. Orientation

All volunteers require orientation to DPR and its mission. An orientation will introduce volunteers to the park and/or division, their assignments, their co-workers, and the performance and attitudes expected of them. An orientation checklist for volunteers could be completed and kept with the volunteer's file. (A sample checklist is provided in the Appendix.)

Proper orientation will help volunteers feel welcome and will help them get the most from their volunteer experience. Orientation is not training and should not be used to teach volunteers skills or provide the depth of knowledge they may need to do their jobs.

Orientation of a new volunteer is made easier for the immediate supervisor when a "formal" orientation session is held. The "where," "what," "when," "why," and "with whom" of the volunteer's first assignment need to be covered, as well as letting him or her know where to go for help.

As part of the orientation, it is important that volunteers understand the liability protection and injury compensation they are eligible for under the VIP Program. This coverage and protection applies only while volunteers are working within the scope defined by their *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208H) and duty statement.

2. Training

Training is an ongoing process. Initial on-site training is an integral part of an active volunteer program. Periodic ongoing or refresher training should also be incorporated into your volunteer program as a way of increasing a volunteer's overall effectiveness. The time devoted to volunteer training will be well invested, providing not only greater program efficiency but also increased job satisfaction among your volunteers.

When planning volunteer training, consider the following:

- Be as precise as possible in identifying the skills/knowledge to be learned or refined.
- Be as job-specific as possible.
- Be realistic about what you can accomplish in the allotted time.
- Involve experienced volunteers and staff.
- Draw on the skills and experiences of those attending.
- Look for opportunities to train volunteers and staff together.



For the sake of the volunteer and our equipment, training is important.

D. Keeping the Program Running Smoothly

1. Program Leadership

The goal of a good program leader is to help volunteers feel productive, successful, supported, recognized, and rewarded. Volunteers receive no monetary reward for their work – their “reward” comes in the form of a feeling of accomplishment and a sense of belonging. Volunteers want to take pride in their work and in their relationship with DPR.



Someone needs to set the course.

A successful program leader knows this. He/she keeps morale and productivity high by making volunteers feel wanted and part of the working team; complimenting volunteers for work well done; showing volunteers how their work helps the Department achieve its goals; providing volunteers with a visible means of identifying themselves with the Department; and recognizing and rewarding volunteers for their contributions.

2. Assessment and Review

Periodic assessments and reviews of performance provide vital two-way communication between volunteers and their program leaders and supervisors. Frequent, informal evaluations furnish volunteers with feedback on the quality of their work. Such evaluations also enable supervisors to recognize potential program-wide problem areas that may need to be addressed with additional training or other actions. Program leaders should conduct informal interviews with new volunteers after the first four to six weeks. These evaluations can be used as references for identifying needed training for current and future volunteers. Copies of all written evaluations must be given to the volunteer, as well as being placed with his or her *Volunteer Service Agreement* (DPR 208). You may find it more convenient to use the spaces that have been provided on the back of the form for periodic evaluations.

It is also important for volunteers to evaluate the VIP program. They can tell you much about the program that you don't see while working on the “inside”—what is good and what needs to be improved. These evaluations can occur informally (for example, a suggestion box) or formally (such as during an exit interview or through a survey).

3. Problem Solving

It is in the best interest of all parties involved to resolve any conflicts or concerns at the lowest level possible and as soon as possible. When a problem first appears, it should be brought to the attention of the volunteer and the volunteer coordinator. If problem-solving measures do not improve the situation and the volunteer cannot be assigned to another project or task without a repeat of the problem, termination of his or her services may be required.

4. Active Status Standards

Each district or individual park unit should formally establish standards for the minimum number of hours that a volunteer must work in order to remain on active status (see page 12 for policy note.) A minimum time requirement serves several needs. Most important, potential volunteers are made immediately aware of their need to commit a certain amount of time each week or each month, and thus are less likely to drop out soon after completing their training. Each volunteer must be informed of the minimum time requirement during the initial interview process, and it should be included on the duty statement as well.

In many cases, 6 to 8 hours per month is a reasonable minimum time commitment. If the required time standard is too small, you will spend significantly more time (and money) scheduling coverage. If your required standard is higher, such as 24 to 32 hours per month (common in many larger museums), you will have to schedule fewer people to cover your shifts, but you may encounter more difficulty in finding and maintaining enough volunteers willing or able to make such a time commitment.

The district volunteer coordinator, at the request of the unit volunteer coordinator, may place a volunteer on inactive status for a predetermined length of time if the volunteer fails to meet the established time requirement. Inactive status may also be granted for other reasons, such as for not completing initial or ongoing training, or upon written application by the volunteer stating that he or she will not be able to fulfill the required time obligation.

When a volunteer requests a return to active status, he or she must reapply in writing to the district volunteer coordinator or designee who will determine if the request will be granted. Return to active status is not guaranteed, as the unit or district's volunteer program needs may have changed. If return to active status is approved, all volunteer sign-up documents must be reviewed and updated as needed. Reorientation or program training may also be necessary.

E. Bolstering Morale and Rewarding Achievement

1. Recognition and Motivation

Volunteer recognition, if presented by DPR staff on a regular basis and at differing levels of formality, is a strong motivational tool that helps increase volunteer productivity and retention rates. There are many ways to motivate volunteers in addition to the departmental awards and passes covered under “Part I Section J: Volunteer Recognition.” Following is a partial list of actions that should be incorporated into your volunteer programs:

- Give constructive feedback to volunteers about their work, formally in a scheduled meeting, and informally on a regular on-the-job basis.
- Provide opportunities for your volunteers to give feedback about the park and the VIP program. Solicit their ideas by using a suggestion box and follow their advice where appropriate. These practices foster two-way communication.
- Have an open-door policy with volunteers. Invite them to drop by and chat, air concerns, or discuss their work.
- Give volunteers opportunities for increased responsibilities (in other words, promotional or advancement opportunities within your volunteer organization).
- Invite volunteers to staff meetings and encourage them to actively participate.
- Recognize volunteers through formal events. Have an annual Volunteer Day (perhaps during National Volunteer Week in April) to formally recognize volunteers, or schedule formal get-togethers such as banquets, parties, picnics, etc.
- Invite volunteers to lunch or have a sack lunch day for everyone.
- Let staff know when volunteers are providing an important and valuable service.
- Look for secondary motivations (the individual volunteer’s personal agenda), and acknowledge them by providing opportunities to socialize, train for leadership, gain a sense of achievement, etc.
- Grant special privileges to volunteers:
 - behind-the-scenes tours
 - special “invitation-only” events
 - open access to libraries
- Provide variety for volunteers through:
 - short-term projects
 - sharing the exciting, as well as the mundane, assignments
- Communicate that individual and group volunteer involvement and support is vital.
- Recognize volunteers informally, on a daily basis. This might take the form of a thank-you after a difficult day, a birthday card, a smile, etc.
- Provide a regular parking space.
- Include a story in the park newsletter, *News & Views*, or local newspaper telling of a volunteer’s impact on people or programs.



Give volunteers a chance to meet other volunteers through social gatherings.

- Recognize the paid staff who work with volunteers. A recognition system for staff who effectively work with volunteers will do much to maintain good relations between volunteers and paid staff.
- Make a video of a volunteer. Have it show the volunteer at the park work site; get testimony from paid staff and from other volunteers; write a poem or a song and perform it; make the video serious, make it fun; make the video a memento the volunteer can take home and enjoy for years to come.

2. Non-Departmental Awards and Volunteer Programs

In addition to DPR awards (see Part I Section J: Volunteer Recognition), a number of awards are available that recognize the special accomplishments of volunteers and organizations. Examples of these awards include The First Lady of California Volunteer Award, Take Pride in California and Take Pride in America Awards, and the President's Service Awards. Department staff may nominate candidates for these awards.

"Make a Difference Day," sponsored by USA Weekend and the Points of Light Foundation, is the last Saturday in October.

The third week in April is traditionally designated as National Volunteers Week, making it an appropriate time to recognize state park volunteers and their efforts.

Contact the Volunteer Programs Coordinator for specific information about these awards and events.